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Bureau of Public Affairs • Department of State

International Narcotics Control June 1989

Background: Ninety-five percent of the illicit narcotics consumed in the US originates overseas; foreign sources account for all of the cocaine and heroin and most of the US-consumed marijuana. It is estimated that US consumers use 65% of the world's supply of illegal narcotics.

Because meaningful reductions in the supply of narcotics can only be made through cooperative efforts with foreign governments, narcotics control is a high foreign policy concern as well as a national security issue. The Secretary of State has primary responsibility for international narcotics control; within the Department of State, the Bureau for International Narcotics Matters has both a diplomatic and a program role in controlling the production and trafficking of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana. The bureau has a budget of $115 million for fiscal year 1990 and administers narcotics control programs in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia. The programs combine assistance and equipment for eradication, enforcement, development, training, and public diplomacy.

Scope of international narcotics problem: The worldwide supply of narcotics is far greater than the legitimate demand for these substances. Illicit narcotics production, trafficking, and consumption have reached unprecedented levels and pose serious threats to the health and national security of developing as well as developed countries. No longer approached simply as a health or social problem, the issue of narcotics production, trafficking, and consumption commands attention at the highest levels of the US and foreign governments. The stability of democratic governments in developing countries is threatened by the vast profits generated by the drug trade and by the collaboration between drug cartels and insurgents. This is particularly significant in countries where there is coca-production and cocaine trafficking. In developed countries, scarce resources must be diverted to cope with drug abusers and criminal activities.

Cocaine: Coca, the raw product used to produce cocaine is grown in the Andean countries of Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia. Taken together, these countries produce as much as 227,000 metric tons of coca leaf, enough to manufacture more than 450 metric tons of cocaine hydrochloride. The majority of the world's coca is grown in Peru; 115,630 hectares (285,610 acres) of coca were cultivated in 1988. Most of this coca is grown in Peru's Upper Huallaga Valley where traffickers and terrorists thrive amidst violent lawlessness, living off cocaine profits. Coca farmers and traffickers have badly damaged the valley with slash and burn techniques and the dumping of precursor chemicals that gravely threaten the environmental future of the Peruvian Amazon region.

Coca grew on nearly 50,000 hectares (123,500 acres) of land in Bolivia last year, an increase of 20% over the previous year. Colombia is the

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primary location for cocaine processing; traffickers use Peruvian and Bolivian leaf to manufacture the cocaine that is smuggled into the US and Europe.

Cocaine control efforts: The US Government has been working with Andean governments to reduce coca production and cocaine trafficking; to date there has been no major reduction in either activity. Without a massive aerial eradication campaign employing herbicides against the coca crop, manual eradication will reduce coca acreage only modestly, while exposing workers to threats from traffickers and terrorists. Enforcement efforts have been equally frustrating as US law enforcement agencies, working with their foreign counterparts, struggle against well-armed and well-financed trafficking organizations. There have been some encouraging results, however, as Latin American governments come to realize the immediate, severe threats to the economic, political, and social health of their countries posed by cocaine and begin to work together to protect their people. Last year's month-long joint operations of the International Drug Enforcement Conference resulted in the seizure of 12 metric tons of cocaine.

Heroin: The US has limited or no access to the heroin source countries where 90% of US-consumed heroin originates. Burma, Afghanistan, Laos, and Iran are major opium producers and production in these countries seems to be increasing. Pakistan, Thailand, and Mexico also are opium producers; their governments, however, are engaging in aggressive programs to eradicate opium and dismantle heroin trafficking organizations. US drug law enforcement and health officials have expressed concern about the grave potential that increases in heroin supplies may have in our country.

Marijuana: The largest foreign sources of marijuana are Colombia, Mexico, and Jamaica. Successful aerial marijuana eradication programs are underway in the three major foreign source countries; last year, Jamaica made significant reductions in its marijuana cultivation for the second consecutive year. The US has now emerged as a major source of high-quality marijuana for US consumption.

US action: The international strategy carried out by US agencies, including the Agency for International Development, the US Information Agency, and the Drug Enforcement Administration, is designed to:

- Reduce the supplies of cocaine, heroin, and marijuana through an integrated program of narcotics control;
- Decrease tolerance for illicit narcotics and stimulate support for effective worldwide narcotics control through public diplomacy initiatives;
- Eliminate major drug trafficking networks and cartels through increased seizures and arrests, prosecutions, and forfeiture of assets; and
- Secure increased international cooperation in worldwide narcotics control matters through diplomatic and program initiatives.

Director William Bennett of the Office of National Drug Control Policy is in charge of formulating a national strategy encompassing both domestic and international initiatives by September 5, 1989. It must include measurable objectives achievable in the next 2 years.